

Holy Bible  
and  
Sacred Books  
of the East.

SIR M. MONIER WILLIAMS.

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The holy Bible and the  
sacred books of the east

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THE HOLY BIBLE  
AND THE  
SACRED BOOKS OF THE EAST



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AND THE  
SACRED BOOKS OF THE EAST

FOUR ADDRESSES

TO WHICH IS ADDED

A FIFTH ADDRESS  
ON ZENĀNA MISSIONS

✓  
BY THE LATE  
SIR M. MONIER-WILLIAMS, K.C.I.E.

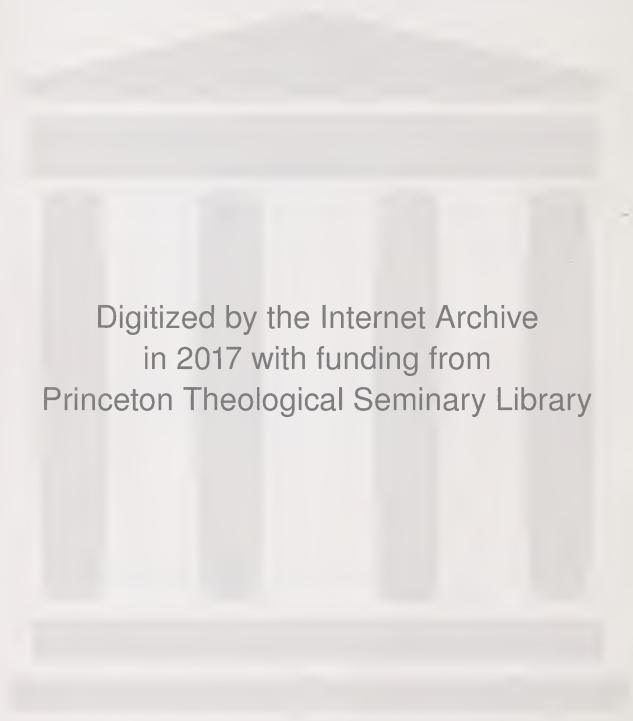
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## PREFATORY WORD.

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I HAVE so often been asked whether my recent Addresses at Missionary and other Meetings have been printed, that I have acceded to a request that they should be published. It must be borne in mind that the Addresses were delivered as *Speeches*, when other speakers either preceded or followed me. Portions, therefore, had to be omitted, through want of time, except in the case of the first, which was delivered *in extenso*.

Moreover, as I had to deliver the Speeches in different places, occasional repetitions are observable. Yet each Address has a distinctive character of its own, separating it from the others. For example, the first (p. 7) deals with the whole subject of a comparison between our Holy Bible and the Sacred Books

of the East ; the second (p. 20) deals especially with Buddhism ; the third (p. 30) with the Veda and the Kurān ; the fourth (p. 39) with Bibliolatry and Letter-Worship ; the fifth (p. 48) with Zenāna Work in India.

I have added Explanatory Notes, which I hope will make the Addresses more useful.

OXFORD, *July* 1887.

# THE HOLY BIBLE

AND THE

## SACRED BOOKS OF THE EAST.

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### ADDRESS I.

*Delivered at the Anniversary Meeting of the Church  
Missionary Society, held in Exeter Hall on May  
3, 1887.*

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AN old friend of mine lately gone to his rest, the Rev. James Long,<sup>1</sup> a valued missionary of this

<sup>1</sup> The Rev. J. Long was for thirty-two years a C.M.S. missionary in North India. He first went out there in 1840, and at once began those active labours in connection with Christian vernacular literature and education for which, as well as for his consequent familiar intercourse with the natives of Bengal, throughout his long period of service, he was conspicuous. He gave to the C.M.S. the bulk of his little property, about £2,000, to be a fund for the support of lectureships on Oriental Religions. He died on March 23d, 1887. He was the author of a useful little collection of 'The Proverbs of Eastern Nations,' published a few years before his death.

Society, and founder of the James Long Lectures on the Non-Christian Religions, said to me a very few days before his death, 'I hear you are going to speak at the Anniversary Meeting of the Church Missionary Society; mind you urge upon our missionaries the importance of studying the Non-Christian Religious Systems.' This suggestion was very gratifying to me, because it proved that he trusted me to speak with no uncertain sound on a difficult subject requiring great knowledge and experience. Certainly unusual facilities for the study of these systems are now placed at our disposal; for in this Jubilee year of the reign of our beloved Queen, the University of Oxford, to which I belong, has completed the publication of about thirty stately volumes of the so-called sacred books of the East, comprising the Veda,<sup>1</sup> the Zend-

<sup>1</sup> The Veda of the Brāhmans consists of three divisions :—(1), Mantra, or prayer and praise, embodied in texts and metrical hymns, and comprised in four principal collections called Ṛik, Yajus, Sāman, and Atharvan; (2), Brāhmaṇa, or ritualistic precept and illustration, written in prose; (3), Upanishad, or philosophical doctrine appended to the afore-said Brāhmaṇa—generally in prose treatises, with occasional verse. Of these three divisions of the Veda, only portions of 2 and 3 have been as yet included in the series of translations, namely, the 'Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa,' by Professor Eggeling; and the Āchāndogya, Talavakāra, Aitareya-āraṇyaka, Kaushītaki-brāhmaṇa, Vājasaneyi-saṃhitā, Katha, Muṇḍaka, Taittirīyaka, Bṛihadāraṇyaka, Śvetāśvatara, Praśna, and Maitrāyaṇa-Brāhmaṇa Upanishads, by Professor F. Max Müller. The absence of every one of the works under (1) is a defect for which no satisfactory explanation has yet been given. An

Avesta of the Zoroastrians,<sup>1</sup> the Confucian Texts,<sup>2</sup> the Buddhist Tripiṭaka,<sup>3</sup> and the Muhammadan

advertisement tells us that the lacuna is to be partially filled up, but it is difficult to understand the reason for the delay, seeing that the Ṛig-veda is the oldest and most important of these 'Sacred Books,' and considering that at least two German translations of that Veda have been before the public for years. Why, too, have we not that important Hindū bible, the Bhāgavata-purāṇa?

<sup>1</sup> The Zend Avesta of the Pārsīs, or Zoroastrians, consists of (1) the Gāthās, or Songs, comprising five short collections of metrical compositions resembling the hymns of the Ṛig-veda and Sāma-veda, and probably as old as some of the oldest Vedic hymns, or at least not composed later than the twelfth century B.C.; (2) the Yaṣna (Sanskṛit Yajña), the liturgy, or prayer-book used in all ritual observances, and properly including the five above-named Gāthās under it; (3) the Visparad, consisting of twenty-three short invocations added to the Yaṣna, and addressed to all good spirits; (4) the Vendidād, or code of purification (containing rules for preventing and removing defilement) which, although placed first in the Avesta, corresponds in chronological order to the Code of Manu, while in giving spells against demons it resembles the Atharva-Veda and Tantras; (5) the Yashts, consisting of twenty invocations and prayers, addressed (sometimes by historical celebrities) to particular divine beings (Yazata). Of these five, the Yaṣna and Visparad have been translated by L. H. Mills, and the Vendidād and Yashts by Professor James Darmesteter.

<sup>2</sup> Of the Confucian Texts, the Shū King, the religious portions of the Shih King, and the Hsiāo King, the Yī King, the Lī Cī, or Collection of Treatises on the Rules of Propriety and Ceremonial Usages, have been translated by Professor Legge.

<sup>3</sup> The Tripiṭaka, or 'three collections' of sacred books of the Buddhists, are divided under the following heads:—(1) Vinaya, 'rules of discipline,' for the Order; (2) Sūtra (or Sutta), precepts which at first constituted the principal Dharma, and ultimately expanded into long dialogues on moral conduct, and long discourses on doctrine, etc.; (3) Abhi-dharma, 'further

Kurān<sup>1</sup>—all of them translated by well-known translators. But it seems to me that our missionaries are already sufficiently convinced of the necessity of studying these works, and of making themselves conversant with the false creeds they have to fight against. How could an army of invaders have any chance of success in an enemy's country without a knowledge of the position and strength of its fortresses, and without knowing how to turn the batteries they may capture against the camp of the foe? Surely I may take all this for granted. At any rate, I think I may do more good on the present occasion if, instead of dwelling on so manifest a duty, I venture to utter a few words of warning as to the subtle danger that lurks beneath the duty.

Perhaps I may best explain the nature of this danger by describing the process my own mind has

Dharma,' or additional precepts and explanations relative to the law, philosophy, and metaphysics, which are now believed to be later in date than 1 and 2. Of these three collections the Vinaya Texts have been translated by Professor T. W. Rhys Davids and Professor Hermann Oldenberg, viz., the Pātimokkha, Mahāvagga, and Kullavagga. The Buddhist Suttas translated by T. W. Rhys Davids are :—(1) The Mahāparinibbāna Suttanta; (2) the Dhamma-ĉakka-ppavattana Sutta; (3) the Tevijja Suttanta; (4) the Akaṅkheyya Sutta; (5) the Cetokhila Sutta; (6) the Mahā-sudassana Suttanta; (7) the Sabbāsava Sutta. The Dhammapada, translated by F. Max Müller, and the Sutta-Nipāta, translated by V. Fausböll.

<sup>1</sup> The translation of the Kurān, as given in the series, is that by the late Professor E. H. Palmer.

gone through whilst engaged in studying these so-called sacred books of the East, as I have now done for at least forty years. In my youth I had been accustomed to hear all non-Christian religions described as 'inventions of the devil.' And when I began investigating Hindūism and Buddhism, some well-meaning Christian friends expressed their surprise that I should waste my time by grubbing in the dirty gutters of heathendom. Well, after a little examination, I found many beautiful gems glittering there ; nay, I met with bright coruscations of true light flashing here and there amid the surrounding darkness. Now, fairness in fighting one's opponents is ingrained in every Englishman's nature, and as I prosecuted my researches into these non-Christian systems, I began to foster a fancy that they had been unjustly treated. I began to observe and trace out curious coincidences and comparisons with our own Sacred Book of the East. I began, in short, to be a believer in what is called the evolution and growth of religious thought. 'These imperfect systems,' I said to myself, 'are clearly steps in the development of man's religious instincts and aspirations. They are interesting efforts of the human mind struggling upwards towards Christianity. Nay, it is probable that they were all intended to lead up to the One True Religion, and that Christianity is, after all, merely the climax, the complement, the fulfilment of them all.'

Now there is unquestionably a delightful fascination about such a theory, and, what is more, there are really elements of truth in it. But I am glad of this opportunity of stating publicly that I am persuaded I was misled by its attractiveness, and that its main idea is quite erroneous. The charm and danger of it, I think, lie in its apparent liberality, breadth of view, and toleration. In the *Times* of last October 14th, you will find recorded a remarkable conversation between a Lāma priest and a Christian traveller, in the course of which the Lāma says that 'Christians describe their religion as the best of all religions; whereas among the nine rules of conduct for the Buddhist there is one that directs him never either to think or to say that his own religion is the best, considering that sincere men of other religions are deeply attached to them.' Now to express sympathy with this kind of liberality is sure to win applause among a certain class of thinkers in these days of universal toleration and religious free trade. We must not forget, too, that our Bible tells us that God has not left Himself without witness, and that in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted with Him. Yet I contend, notwithstanding, that a limp, flabby, jelly-fish kind of tolerance is utterly incompatible with the nerve, fibre, and backbone that ought to characterise a manly Christian. I maintain that a Christian's



character ought to be exactly what the Christian's Bible intends it to be. Take that sacred Book of ours; handle reverently the whole volume; search it through and through, from the first chapter to the last, and mark well the spirit that pervades the whole. You will find no limpness, no flabbiness about its utterances. Even sceptics who dispute its divinity are ready to admit that it is a thoroughly manly book. Vigour and manhood breathe in every page. It is downright and straightforward, bold and fearless, rigid and uncompromising. It tells you and me to be either hot or cold. If God be God, serve him. If Baal be God, serve him. We cannot serve both. We cannot love both. Only one Name is given among men whereby we may be saved. No other name, no other Saviour, more suited to India, to Persia, to China, to Arabia, is ever mentioned—is ever hinted at.

What! says the enthusiastic student of the science of religion, do you seriously mean to sweep away as so much worthless waste-paper, all these thirty stately volumes of the Sacred Books of the East just published by the University of Oxford? No—not at all—nothing of the kind. On the contrary, we welcome these books. We ask every missionary to study their contents, and thankfully lay hold of whatsoever things are true and of good report in them. But we warn him that there can be no greater mistake than to force these non-

Christian bibles into conformity with some scientific theory of development, and then point to the Christian's Holy Bible as the crowning product of religious evolution. So far from this, these non-Christian bibles are all developments in the wrong direction. They all begin with some flashes of true light, and end in utter darkness. Pile them, if you will, on the left side of your study table, but place your own Holy Bible on the right side—all by itself—all alone—and with a wide gap between.

And now, with all deference to the able men I see around me, I crave permission to tell you why—or at least to give you two good reasons, for venturing to contravene, in so plain-spoken a manner, the favourite philosophy of the day. Listen to me, ye youthful students of the so-called sacred books of the East, search them through and through, and tell me, do they affirm of Vyāsa, of Zoroaster, of Confucius, of Buddha, of Muhammad, what our Bible affirms of the Founder of Christianity,<sup>1</sup> that *He, a sinless Man, was made sin?*<sup>2</sup>—not merely that He

<sup>1</sup> When I used the expression the 'Founder of Christianity,' I was thinking of the words,—'The Church's One Foundation is Jesus Christ, her Lord.' In truth, Christ is the Foundation of Christianity, as well as the Founder; the Subject of God's revelation, as well as the Revealer, and perhaps more the first than the last. 'Behold I lay in Zion, for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone.' This was said by Isaiah about 760 years before the birth of Christ. See also 1 Peter ii. 4.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Corinthians v. 21.

is the eradicator of sin, but that He, the sinless Son of Man, was himself made Sin. Vyāsa and the other founders of Hindūism enjoined severe penances, endless lustral washings, incessant purifications, infinite repetitions of prayers, painful pilgrimages, arduous ritual and sacrificial observances, all with the one idea of getting rid of sin. All their books say so. But do they say that the very men who exhausted every invention for the eradication of sin were themselves *sinless men made sin*? Zoroaster, too, and Confucius, and Buddha, and Muhammad, one and all bade men strain every nerve to get rid of sin, or at least of the misery of sin, but do their sacred books say that they themselves were *sinless men made sin*? Understand me, I do not presume as a layman to interpret the apparently contradictory proposition put forth in our Bible that *a sinless man was made sin*. All I now contend for is that it stands alone; that it is wholly unparalleled; that it is not to be matched by the shade of a shadow of a similar declaration in any other book claiming to be the exponent of the doctrine of any other religion in the world.

Once again, ye youthful students of the so-called sacred books of the East, search them through and through, and tell me do they affirm of Vyāsa, of Zoroaster, of Confucius, of Buddha, of Muhammad, what our Bible affirms of the Founder of Christianity —that *He, a dead and buried Man, was made Life*, not merely that He is the Giver of life, but that He,

the dead and buried Man, *is* Life. 'I *am* the Life.'<sup>1</sup> 'When Christ, who *is* our Life, shall appear.'<sup>2</sup> 'He that hath the Son *hath* Life.'<sup>3</sup> Let me remind you, too, that the blood is the Life, and that our Sacred Book adds this matchless, this unparalleled, this astounding assertion: 'Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, ye have no life in you.'<sup>4</sup> Again, I say, I am not now presuming to interpret so marvellous, so stupendous a statement. All I contend for is, that it is absolutely unique; and I defy you to produce the shade of a shadow of a similar declaration in any other sacred book of the world. And bear in mind that these two matchless, these two unparalleled declarations are closely, are intimately, are indissolubly connected with the great central facts and doctrines of our religion, the Incarnation, the Crucifixion, the Resurrection, the Ascension of Christ. Vyāsa,<sup>5</sup> Zoroaster,<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> St John xi. 25; xiv. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Colossians iii. 4.

<sup>3</sup> I John v. 12.

<sup>4</sup> St John vi. 53.

<sup>5</sup> Vyāsa is the name given by the Hindūs to the supposed compiler of the Vedas, the Mahā-bhārata, the Purāṇas, and the Vedānta philosophy. He is a hopelessly mythical personage, whose date cannot possibly be fixed. The probability is that the Vedas, as well as the other sacred books of the Hindūs, had several authors, though some one person may have arranged them, and therefore have been called Vyāsa, 'the Arranger.' Some such sage may have existed as an arranger of the Vedic hymns about a thousand years before Christ.

<sup>6</sup> Zoroaster, the celebrated sage of ancient Persia, is by some held to be a mythical personage like Vyāsa, but, although we know little or nothing about his biography, his existence as a historical

Confucius,<sup>1</sup> Buddha,<sup>2</sup> Muhammad,<sup>3</sup> are all dead and buried ; and mark this—their flesh is dissolved ; their

personage is about as certain as that of Gautama Buddha. All the great teachers of the ancient world have mythical biographies, Christ alone excepted, whose life and acts rest on a clear historical basis. Zoroaster's name, as it appears in the Avesta, is Zarathushtra. This was Persianised into Zardusht, and has been Europeanised into Zoroaster. The Pārsīs, who are the only representatives of the ancient Persians (except a scattered remnant in Persia), maintain that Zoroaster flourished in the time of Gustāshp, falsely identified with Darius Hysvaspes, between 500 and 550 B.C. He probably lived many centuries earlier. He is sometimes called Spitama Zarathushtra, just as Buddha is called Gautama Buddha. One chief point in his doctrine was the perpetual conflict or antagonism between good and evil, life and death.

<sup>1</sup> Confucius, the celebrated sage and moral teacher of China, 'the stamp of whose character and teachings is still impressed on the institutions of his country,' lived, according to Professor Legge, from about 550 to 478 B.C. More is certainly known of him than of Zoroaster, and he is said to have been of illustrious lineage. Confucius is merely the Latinised form of the name Kung Fu-Tze, 'the philosopher or master Kung.' One of his most eminent followers was Mencius ; but he had a still more celebrated contemporary, Lao-tze, a name meaning 'the old philosopher,' who was the father of Taoism, or the doctrine of Tao, 'the way,' which some identify with nature—the cause and effect of all things.

<sup>2</sup> Buddha, the celebrated sage of India, and the supposed reformer of the doctrines of Vyāsa, was probably born about 500 B.C. Though his teaching spread among all the Mongolian races over the greater part of Asia, and as far north as China, Mongolia, and Japan, very little of his life can be relied on as historical. His personal name was Gautama, the name Buddha being merely a title, signifying 'the enlightened One.' He has numerous other titles, such as Siddhārtha, 'he whose object in coming unto the world has been fulfilled.'

<sup>3</sup> Muhammad, whose name is often written Mohammed,

bones have crumbled into dust; their bodies are extinct. Even their followers admit this. Christianity alone commemorates the passing into the heavens of its divine Founder, not merely in the spirit, but in the body, and 'with flesh, bones, and all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature,'<sup>1</sup> to be the eternal source of life and holiness to His people.

Bear with me a moment longer. It requires some courage to appear intolerant in these days of flabby compromise and milk-and-water concession—but I contend that the two unparalleled declarations quoted by me from our Holy Bible make a gulf between it and the so-called sacred books of the East which sever the one from the other utterly, hopelessly, and for ever—not a mere rift which may be easily closed up—not a mere rift across which the Christian and the non-Christian may shake hands and interchange similar ideas in regard to essential truths—but a veritable gulf which cannot be bridged over by any science of religious thought; yes, a bridgeless chasm which no theory of evolution can ever span. Go forth, then, ye missionaries, in your Master's name;

'the praised One,' the celebrated false prophet of Arabia, who claimed to teach Islām the doctrine of resignation to the will of God as a successor of Abraham, Moses, and even of Christ Himself, is too well known to require a note. He is of course a comparatively modern teacher. His flight to Medina, which fixes the Hijra (Hegira), or Muhammadan era, took place A.D. 622.

<sup>1</sup> Church of England Prayer Book, Article IV.

go forth into all the world, and, after studying all its false religions and philosophies, go forth and fearlessly proclaim to suffering humanity the plain, the unchangeable, the eternal facts of the Gospel—nay, I might almost say the stubborn, the unyielding, the inexorable facts of the Gospel. Dare to be downright with all the uncompromising courage of your own Bible, while with it your watchwords are love, joy, peace, reconciliation. Be fair, be charitable, be Christ-like; but let there be no mistake. Let it be made absolutely clear that Christianity cannot, must not, be watered down to suit the palate of either Hindū, Pārsī, Confucianist, Buddhist, or Muhammadan, and that whosoever wishes to pass from the false religion to the true can never hope to do so by the rickety planks of compromise, or by help of faltering hands held out by half-hearted Christians. He must leap the gulf in faith, and the living Christ will spread His everlasting arms beneath and land him safely on the Eternal Rock.



## ADDRESS II.

*Delivered at the Anniversary Meeting of the British  
and Foreign Bible Society, held in Exeter Hall on  
May 5, 1886.*

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I FEEL that I am very unfitted to take the place of the American Minister—who is unexpectedly prevented from being present to-day—in proposing the first resolution ; and yet there is some fitness in my being asked to address you, for I have been during more than a quarter of a century the holder of perhaps the only professorship in Great Britain which has for its object the conversion of the natives of India to Christianity by disseminating among them the Holy Scriptures.

The late Colonel Boden, who was of the Honourable East India Company's service, bequeathed the whole of his property to the University of Oxford, for the promotion of the study of Sanskrit, being of opinion—I give you the very words of his will—‘that a more general and critical knowledge of



the Sanskrit language would be a means of enabling his countrymen to proceed with the conversion of the natives of India to the Christian religion, by disseminating a knowledge of the Sacred Scriptures among them more effectually than all other means whatsoever.' You see that this good Colonel Boden, like many other military men, I am happy to say, in India—men who have been the salt of our Indian Empire—was a soldier and servant of Christ; and valuing the Bible more than any other earthly possession, he believed that it was the duty of this country, to which God has committed a vast Indian Empire as a sacred trust—it was the duty of this country to give back to our Eastern peoples that most precious of all treasures which we have received from the East, our own Holy Bible, translated into their own vernaculars. He knew, too, that Sanskrit was the sacred language of the Brāhmans, the language which is the key to all the spoken dialects of India, and the key to the religious thoughts, the customs, and the superstitions of the natives; and he knew that a translation into Sanskrit was more likely to commend itself to the learned natives of India than any other translation.

Well, then, if God has committed to us this sacred trust, this vast Eastern empire, what account have we to give of our stewardship? Let this great Society—let the Report which we have just heard read, be our reply. All honour be to this great,

this faithful Society; and all honour be also to the Missionaries of the Baptist Society in India, for it is to them that we owe the first translation that we possess of the Bible into Sanskrit. In the life of Dr Wenger, which has just been published by Dr Underhill, of the Baptist Society, we find recorded all the details of the work of that noble-hearted, that devoted missionary, in translating the Bible into Sanskrit.

But if it is our duty, as God's trustees in India, to bestow upon the natives the Bible translated into their own languages, it is also our duty to acquaint ourselves with their own so-called sacred scriptures that we may be in a position to contrast the false with the true, and to urge the true sacred Book of the East on their acceptance. Now, as many here know, a great deal of importance has recently been attached to the so-called 'sacred books of the East,' which are at present being translated and published by the University of Oxford, where I am a Professor; and if you look in the *Times* of last Monday, you will see nearly a whole column devoted to an enumeration of these books of the East, so far as they have been yet printed.

I must say that it redounds very much to the credit of the University of Oxford, that it should have undertaken to print and publish these books, held sacred by the natives of our Eastern Empire, and so enable every one to estimate them

at their right value. For myself I may claim that, in the discharge of my duties for forty-two years, I have devoted as much time as any man living to the study of these books. And I venture to tell this meeting what I have found to be the one keynote — the one diapason, so to speak, of all these books, whether it be the Veda of the Brāhmans, the Purāṇas of the Śaivas and Vaiṣṇavas, the Zend Avesta of the Pārsīs, the Confucian texts of the Chinese, the Tripiṭaka of the Buddhists, or the Kurān of the Muhammadans — the one keynote, the one diapason, the one refrain I have found running through them all, is salvation by works. They all declare that salvation must be purchased, must be bought with a price, and that the sole price, the sole purchase money, must be our own works and deservings.

Here, then, we make our grand contrast, and draw our broad line of separation. Our own Holy Bible, our own sacred Book of the East, is from beginning to end a protest against this doctrine. Good works are indeed enjoined upon us in our own sacred Book far more strongly than in any other sacred book of the East<sup>1</sup>; but only as the

<sup>1</sup> This part of my address seems to have been ignored by the writer of an article in a Buddhist magazine, published in Ceylon, called the 'Sarasavisandaresa.' In that article the Buddhist writer criticises my speech, and declares that certain texts of our Bible support the Buddhist theory of the all-sufficiency of good works. The writer has much to learn as to the true

outcome of a grateful heart—only as the thank-offering of the fruits of our faith. They are never to be the ransom money of the true disciples of Christ.

‘Put off the pride of self-righteousness,’ says our Holy Bible; ‘it is a filthy garment, utterly unfit to cover the nakedness of your soul at that awful moment when death brings you face to face with a holy God.’ ‘Put on the garment of self-righteousness,’ says every other sacred book of the East. ‘Cling closely to it. Fold it closely to your heart of hearts. Multiply your prayers, your penances, your pilgrimages, your ceremonies, your external rites of all kinds; for nothing else but your own meritorious acts, accumulated like capital at a bank, can save you from eternal ruin.’

We can understand, then, the hold which these sacred books of the East continue to exert on the natives of Asia; for the pride of self-righteousness is very dear to the human heart. It is like a tight-fitting inner garment, the first to be put on, the last to be put off. Nay, this may also account for the fact that in the present day these recently-translated sacred books of the East are gaining many admirers, who fall into raptures over

nature of our Bible, in which no text has full force without its context, and no part can be taken to establish a doctrine without a comparison with other parts, and without the balancing of apparent contradictions in both Old and New Testaments.

the moral precepts which here and there glitter in them, like a few stars sparkling through the rifts of a cloudy sky on a pitch-dark night.

What did the leading journal, the *Times*, say the other day in an article on the Buddhist antiquities in the British Museum? It spoke of the teaching of Buddha as second only to the teaching of Christ!

Well, then, let us take Buddhism, which is thus popularly described as next to Christianity. Let us for a moment, with all reverence, place Buddhism and Christianity in the crucible together. It is often said that Buddha's discourses abound in moral precepts almost identical with those of Christ. Be it so; but in fairness let us take a portion of Buddha's first sermon, which contains the cream of his doctrine. I should like to give it to you from the translation which has just come out at Oxford. The Buddha, who is said to be second only to Christ, made use of words to the following effect:—

‘Birth is suffering. Decay is suffering. Illness is suffering. Death is suffering. Presence of objects we hate is suffering. Separation from objects we love is suffering. Not to obtain what we desire is suffering. Clinging to existence is suffering. Complete cessation of thirst, or of craving for existence, is cessation of suffering; and the eight-fold path which leads to cessation of suffering is right belief, right aspiration, right speech, right

conduct, right means of livelihood, right endeavour, right memory, right meditation. This is the noble truth of suffering.' <sup>1</sup>

And now, with all reverence, I turn, on the other hand, to the first gracious words which proceeded from the mouth of the Founder of Christianity,<sup>2</sup> as given by St Luke (iv. 18):

‘The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor ; He hath sent Me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.’

In contrasting these first utterances of two Eastern teachers, one of whom we Christians believe to be Divine, I ask, What is there of hope for poor suffering humanity in the first utterance of the Buddha ? Is it not more like a death-knell than a voice proclaiming good tidings of great joy to poor suffering sinners ? And here I seem to hear some learned Orientalist remark, ‘Of course it was impossible for Buddha to speak of the Spirit of the Lord, when he denied the existence of all spirit, human or divine ; when he denied any being higher than himself, the perfect man ; but assuredly it must

<sup>1</sup> Mahāvagga, I, 6, 22, *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. xiii.

<sup>2</sup> When I use the expression ‘Founder of Christianity,’ let it be understood that I am using it in the sense explained in note, p. 14.

be admitted that Buddha preached his gospel to the poor—nay, that he was in many respects almost a Christian in his teaching.’ Well, bear with me for a little longer, while I point out a few other contrasts, showing how vast is the gulf which separates the gospel of Buddha from the gospel of Jesus Christ.

And I feel I am compelled to speak out on this occasion, even as I spoke out recently at Oxford in contrasting the Veda of the Brāhmans with our own Holy Bible; for a kind of Doctrine called Neo-Buddhism is spreading, I am sorry to say, in many places both in Europe and America, and also in India, where we hoped that Buddhism had been long extinct. This new doctrine magnifies Buddhism as if, forsooth! it were a very rational sort of creed for an intelligent man to hold in the nineteenth century. Yes, monstrous as it may seem, the Gospel of Christ our Saviour—the gospel of peace and joy—is in some quarters becoming out of fashion, and giving place to the gospel of misery and despair—the gospel of Buddha.

Mark, then, two or three more contrasts which make the gulf I spoke of just now wholly impossible to be bridged over.

In the gospel of Buddha we are told that the whole world lieth in suffering, as you have just heard. In the gospel of Christ the whole world lieth in wickedness.

‘Glory in your sufferings; rejoice in them; make



them steps towards heaven,' says the gospel of Christ. For was not the Captain of your salvation Himself made perfect through suffering? <sup>1</sup> 'Away with all suffering; stamp it out, for it is the plague of humanity,' says the gospel of Buddha.

'The whole world is enslaved by sin,' says the Christian gospel; 'The whole world is enslaved by misery and illusion,' says the Buddhist gospel.

'Sanctify your affections,' says the one; 'Suppress them utterly,' says the other.

'Cherish your body, and present it as a living sacrifice to God,' says the Christian gospel; 'Get rid of your body as the greatest of all curses,' says the Buddhist.

'We are God's workmanship,' says the Christian gospel; 'and God works in us and by us and through us.' 'We are our own workmanship,' says the gospel of Buddha, 'and no one works in us but ourselves.'

Lastly, the Christian gospel teaches us to prize the gift of personal life as the most sacred, the most precious of all God's gifts. 'Life is real, life is earnest,' it seems to say, in the words of the great American poet; and it bids us thirst not for death, nor for extinction, but for the living God; whereas the Buddhist doctrine stigmatises all thirst for life as an ignorant blunder, and sets forth, as the highest of all aims, utter extinction of personal existence.

<sup>1</sup> Hebrews xi. 10.



I have said enough to put you on your guard when you hear people speak too highly of the sacred books of the East other than our own Bible. Let us not shut our eyes to what is excellent and true and of good report in these books; but let us teach Hindūs, Zoroastrians, Confucianists, Buddhists, and Muhammadans that there is only one sacred Book that can be their mainstay, their support, in that awful hour when they pass all alone into the unseen world. There is only one Book to be clasped to the heart,—only one Gospel that can give peace to the fainting soul then. It is the Book that this great Society is engaged in sending to the uttermost ends of the earth. It is the sacred Volume which contains that faithful saying worthy to be accepted of all men, women, and children in the East and in the West, in the North and in the South, ‘that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.’

## ADDRESS III.

*Delivered at the Anniversary Meeting of the Oxford and Oxfordshire Auxiliary of the British and Foreign Bible Society, held at Oxford on November 3, 1885.*

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IT is not my duty as chairman of this meeting to make a long speech, but I should like, as a layman, and as an Oriental Professor who has for many years made a critical study of the chief religious books of the world (English translations of which are now being published at this University), to tell you in a few words how and why my protracted researches and my careful comparisons of one system with another, have led me to the conclusion that our own Holy Bible is the only true Bible of God. Most of those here present probably know that practically there are only five Bibles of non-Christian systems with which our missionaries are

confronted and required to deal. Let me not be misunderstood. I call them Bibles because, as you know, the word Bible means book. The first is the Veda of the Brāhmans or Hindūs, including its supplement of Purāṇas and Tantras ; the second is the Zend-Avesta of the Pārsīs or Zoroastrians ; the third is the collection of Confucian texts ; the fourth is the Tri-piṭaka of the Buddhists ; and the fifth is the Kurān of the Muhammadans.

As to the second, it is held sacred by a comparatively small community, not exceeding at the present time one hundred thousand persons. With regard to the third, it merely consists of moral and political precepts, with rules of propriety and ceremonial usages. As to the fourth or so-called sacred books of the Buddhists—which it is the fashion now-a-days to praise far too highly—let me here express my opinion that they ought not to be reckoned among the Bibles of the world, for true Buddhism is no real religion. It has no God, no Supreme Being, no real prayer, no real clergy. It lays no claim to any supernatural revelation. There remain, then, only the Veda and the Kurān as important non-Christian Bibles held sacred by vast numbers of our fellow-subjects.

Now, I believe it to be the duty of every thinking man to obey the Apostolic injunction of proving all things ; to examine reverently the creeds of other nations ; to compare them with his own most holy

faith, and, however they may suffer by the comparison, to avoid contemptuous expressions in speaking of them. How then—with other books in the world claiming Divine inspiration—may we Christians prove that we alone possess the Bible of God? In the first place, we are not afraid of criticism for our sacred Scriptures. We might as well fear criticism for some glorious view in nature, with its sunlit hills and shaded valleys, and its infinite variety of broken ground forming one harmonious whole.

On the contrary, we court criticism. We do not deny, indeed, that our Bible contains difficulties. I think it was Dr Chalmers who once made use of a metaphor, which some may think a little too homely, when applied to a sacred subject ; but it is so expressive of a great truth, that I venture to remind you of it. He said that if you eat fish you may find it the most nourishing of all foods, but in doing so you may also, if you like, choke yourself with the bones. Even so we may go day by day to our Bibles, and there find the best of food for our hungry souls, but we may also, if we are very foolish, choke ourselves with its difficulties.

How then do we show that we court criticism for our Bible? Let this Society answer the question. Has it not translated the Bible into 267 (see note, p. 45) languages and dialects? Does it not say, or try to say, to every people, race, and tribe on the earth—here is the Christian's Bible in your own

language ; read, mark, learn, and judge of it for yourselves ?

At the Calcutta Exhibition, which I constantly visited at the beginning of last year, the most interesting sight I saw was the stall of this Society, where Bibles in 160 languages were exhibited. The natives of India and of all nationalities, Burmese, Siamese, Chinese, Japanese, and countless uncultured tribes from the hills, in picturesque costumes, thronged the passages round this marvellous stall, and Bibles in their own languages were freely distributed among them. What must have been the feeling of the proud Hindū and Muhammadan in beholding this strange sight ? How vast the difference of their own ideas in regard to their own sacred books ! To translate the Veda or the Kurān into other languages they consider simply desecration. It is the sound and intonation of the sacred Sanskrit and of the sacred Arabic which is of primary importance and primary efficacy ; the sense is merely secondary. Millions and millions who know nothing of Sanskrit are obliged to hear and repeat the Veda in Sanskrit, and millions who are wholly ignorant of Arabic are obliged to hear and repeat the Kurān in Arabic. Think of what would happen if no Christian in any part of the world were allowed to hear, read, or repeat his Bible except in Hebrew or Greek !

Bear with me while I mention two or three other

points in which our own holy Bible seems to me distinguished from all other Bibles as light differs from night.

The Bishop of Peterborough once told us that the best proof of the divine origin of our Bible is the revelation it makes to us of our own nature and needs—a revelation exactly corresponding with our own innermost sense of what our nature and needs really are. I have found no such revelation of our nature and needs in the Veda.

Then again, I once heard Dean Goulburn preach a sermon, in which he dwelt very strongly on what he called the ‘factual,’ or historical basis underlying our Bible. This historical element is wholly wanting both in the Veda and the Kurān.

Then observe one other very remarkable feature. Progressive development marks our Bible, as it does all God’s works. The light of revelation is gradually unfolded, till the perfect illumination of the Epistles and the Revelation of St John is reached. The very reverse is the case in the Veda and the Kurān. In these the earliest utterances contain the greatest light ; the later become darker and darker, just as an innocent child that leaves its father’s home is liable to wander amid mists and fogs, till it falls into some noisome pit, and comes out covered with pollution. Yes, after a life-long study of the religious books of the Hindūs, I feel compelled to express publicly my

opinion of them. They begin with much promise amid scintillations of truth and light, and occasional sublime thoughts from the source of all truth and light, but end in sad corruptions and lamentable impurities.

And now let me give you an instance of what I have myself seen of the miraculous results which God's Bible, distributed among untutored tribes, may effect. Burmah is now exciting great interest, and attracting much attention, and in Burmah we found scattered many years ago, certain wild tribes called Karens. They were immersed in ignorance and superstition till the Bible was brought to them, brought by devoted missionaries, principally American. At least 50,000 members of these tribes have now become Christian (20,000 being communicants), and a group of these came to the Calcutta Exhibition under the guardianship of Dr Vinton—an American missionary who, with no possessions and no badge of sovereignty but a well-worn Bible, is regarded as a sovereign among them. I went by invitation and saw them myself, assembled in an outlying portion of the Exhibition. They were engaged in singing together 'Rock of Ages, cleft for me.' One woman, the wife of a native pastor, told us she had given her son to the service of the Lord from his earliest childhood, and that she was ready to give all her children in the same way. It was a sight never to be effaced from the memory.

And here I have before me for your inspection the instrument by which Dr Vinton and his fellow-missionaries have effected this miracle. It is the whole Bible translated into one of the Karen dialects, and portions of it into other Karen dialects, kindly lent to me for this evening by the Bible Society. The remarkable thing is that these tribes have a tradition that the Bible at a remote period, many centuries ago, existed in their midst. But they left it negligently at the root of a tree ; there fowls came and scattered dust over it, and dogs carried it off. To atone for this neglect they have had to endure hardships, sufferings, and slavery for many generations, till the Bible has now been restored to them by the white men.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A very interesting little work on the 'Loyal Karens of Burma' has just been published by Mr Donald Mackenzie Smeaton, of the Bengal Civil Service. In chap. ix. p. 187, he alludes to the tradition I mentioned in my speech. He also states that the Red Karens possess metal plates which they declare to be part of the original written word given to them by God. The following is one of their ancient hymns handed down by their bards from generation to generation :—

'Father God is very near—  
Lives He now amongst us here ;  
God is not far off, we know—  
Dwells He in our midst below.

'Tis because men are not true,  
That He is not seen by you ;  
'Tis because men turned to sin,  
Now no longer God is seen.

All upon the earth below,  
Is but God's foot-rest we know ;  
Heaven in the heights above  
Is God's seat of truth and love.'

It is instructive to note that religion and loyalty go together.



Bear with me for one minute longer. My travels through many countries, and my experience of many nations, have deepened my conviction that we have arrived at a momentous epoch in the history of the human race. It is not merely that railroads, telegraphs, telephones, and steam-presses are effecting a vast material and moral revolution. It is not merely that sceptical opinions are becoming more and more rife. It is not merely that a mighty upheaving of thought is shaking the foundations of ancient creeds to their very centre. It is that we are threatened with the bursting forth of a deluge of atheism, irreligion, and immorality at the very threshold of our homes. We are threatened with the sweeping away of all the most sacred ties and safeguards of social and family life. At such a crisis the counteracting and remedial influences of God's Word are more than ever needed.

Can we then withhold our help from this great Society? Shall we not all of us here present join heart and hand in a strong pull together, that we

Here is what Mr Smeaton states in his introduction :—‘Probably few of those who have read the newspaper telegrams and narratives of the rebellion in Lower Burma, are aware that a neglected little nation called ‘the Karens,’ inhabiting the mountains and forests of the province, have been the staunchest and bravest defenders of British rule. But for the loyalty and courage of the Karens, the rebel Burmese and Shans would in all probability have over-run Lower Burma. Had the Karens joined in the insurrection, the Queen's Government would, in all probability, for a time at least, have ceased to exist.’

may aid it in its noble efforts to carry the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, first into the dark places of our own loved country, and then to the remotest corners of the habitable globe?

## ADDRESS IV.

*Delivered at the Anniversary Meeting of the Brixton  
Auxiliary of the British and Foreign Bible Society,  
held in Brixton on June 9, 1887.*

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IN availing myself of the privilege accorded to me of occupying the chair this evening, I wish to mention that I had not the advantage of being present at the May Anniversary Meeting of this Society, but I have read in its *Monthly Reporter* the report of several striking speeches by exalted personages made on that occasion. And among others, I have studied with great interest one by a well-known Bishop, who in the course of his remarks warned his hearers against what he termed Bibliolatry, or Bible-worship. Perhaps you may be interested in hearing that not very long ago an equally well-known Dean was holding a children's service in our University Church at Oxford, and began his address thus:—‘My dear children, you

may sometimes hear it said that you are *not* to worship the Bible. Now, mark what I tell you, you *are* to worship the Bible.'

Here, then, we have an excellent Bishop on one side, and an excellent Dean on the other, apparently contradictory in their utterances. The Bishop tells us that we are *not* to worship the Bible, and the Dean tells us that we are to worship it.

Possibly some captious critic here present may irreverently ask which of the two is to be believed, the Bishop or the Dean? I reply, with all reverence, both of them: for both are in the right. The Bishop meant that we are not to worship the letter of the Bible, as Hindūs do the mere words of their Veda, using them as charms to protect them from evil, or to ward off the attacks of disease and approach of death. The Dean meant that we are bound to worship the spiritual element—that living life-giving spirit—that power of God unto salvation which underlies the letter of the Bible.

The Bible itself is, as usual, very plain spoken on this point. It warns us that 'the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.' And it is indeed one most noteworthy characteristic of our Bible, distinguishing it in a remarkable manner from all other sacred books of the East, that it prohibits by this bold figure of speech an almost ineradicable tendency in human nature, impelling it to letter-worship. But

how does the letter kill? We know that it is common to call a law that is not acted on, and has no force, a 'dead letter.' We know, too, that a stereotyped edition of a book, in which every printed word is unalterably fixed, often represents the work of a dead man. It has no life, no vitality, no capability of adjustment to the varying conditions of mankind. Yet, lest any one here should think that to speak of the letter of our Bible as destructive in its effects is a hard saying, I venture still further to illustrate its truth by what takes place in India.

When I was at Amritsar in the Panjāb, I visited the Golden Temple of the Sikhs, which, next to the Tāj at Agra, is one of the most beautiful structures in India. Now, I need scarcely tell those here present who know India that the Sīkhs pride themselves on not worshipping idols.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, it is not so well known that these very Sikhs make a veritable idol of their own bible, the Grantha.<sup>2</sup> Every morning they carry it reverentially, and with great state and ceremony, to the Temple, dress it out in costly brocade, decorate it with sumptuous ornaments, and place it on a throne under a jewelled canopy. Then all

<sup>1</sup> The word 'Sikh' means 'disciple,' and the Sikhs are the disciples and followers of Nānak, who was born about the time of Martin Luther in Europe, and whose idea was to bring about a union between Hindūs and Muhammadans on the common ground of the Unity of God.

<sup>2</sup> The word Grantha is a Sanskrit word meaning 'book.'

through the heat of the day they fan it, or wave chowries over it; and every evening they put it to bed on a golden couch in a consecrated chamber, protected from all intrusion by bolts and bars of iron. For nearly an hour I stood in the Golden Temple watching a constant stream of worshippers, male and female, who passed through its inner sanctuary, bowing their heads before this sacred book of theirs, offering it gifts, or listening to its recital in the Gurumukhī form of the Panjābī language, of which they understood very little. Not long afterwards an outbreak of malignant fever occurred at Amritsar, and what happened? Was there any increased attention to sanitary regulations? No, none whatever; but the continuous reading of the Grantha, or sacred book, was carried on night and day by a succession of priests as the one panacea—the one remedy for the disease then raging, and killing the people by thousands. Here then we have genuine Bibliolatry, and the very extreme of book-worship, where the words and sound alone are supposed to cure bodily diseases while the meaning is unimportant.

Then again, I visited a Buddhist monastery in British Sikkim near Darjiling, and found that the Buddhist 'Law' (the Tri-pitaka, as it is called) was treated by the monks very much as the Sikhs treat their sacred book; and in some Buddhist countries it is personified. Images of a man with four arms

are made to represent the Law, and people bow down before it.

Let me give one other instance.

I once visited the tomb of the Muhammadan Emperor Aurangzīb at Roza in the Nizam's territory. There I found a man seated on the ground with the Kurān spread out before him, reading it very rapidly, but with careful pronunciation of every syllable. After a while, another reader took his place, and then another, and then another; and I was told that twenty men were employed day and night who were engaged in perpetual repetition of the Muhammadan bible, from the first chapter to the last, at the tomb of the great Muhammadan Emperor. Not a letter of the sacred Arabic was allowed to be slurred over, and the sound of every syllable had to be properly intoned, or the efficacy of the repetition would have been neutralised.

Here, then, is another instance of *bonâ fide* Bibliolatry. In point of fact, the majority of Musalmāns care very little for the meaning of their own bible. What they value as far more important, is the correct pronunciation of the words, and the right intonation of the Arabic. Indeed, it is well known that they often wear on their arms particular texts, and even the whole Kurān, exquisitely written in beautiful Arabic letters on rolls of paper or parchment, as amulets,—like the Jewish phylacteries,—to ward off evil.

And then, of course, as another result of this letter-worship, we find that Turkish, Persian, and Hindū Musalmāns never think of substituting Turkish, Persian, and Hindūstānī translations of the Kurān, which they could well understand, for the original Arabic text, which is as unintelligible to them as Hebrew is to some of us. What would you think of any Christian in England, however narrow-minded or prone to superstitious ideas, who was guilty of such letter worship as to read nothing but a Hebrew or Greek Bible, under the belief that the stereotyped words of the original Greek and Hebrew possessed a divine efficacy which our grand old English authorised version lacks? No; it is not the letter, not the stereotyped print nor even the spoken language, but the Spirit that breathes through both Old and New Testament, that every true Christian in every part of the world holds in reverence. We know, of course, that the sixty-six books of our Bible were written in two ancient languages, by men of sundry characters and stations at sundry times, through about sixteen centuries, and in divers manners, suited to the condition, capacity, and circumstances of mankind at divers stages of the world's history. Yet, with all this marvellously wise conformity to God's law of adaptation and variety and, let me add, to the sublime common sense which distinguishes our own Sacred Book of the East from all other sacred books of the world, it is still one and the self-same



Spirit that animates the whole volume, dividing to each portion severally its specific use, purpose, and importance. And that, too, whether the language be the original Hebrew and Greek, or any of the other 280 languages<sup>1</sup> in which this Society presents our Holy Bible to the nations, or whether any one book may have been written eighteen hundred, or twice that number of centuries ago. Yes, I repeat, it is one and the self-same Spirit of Truth which lights up the pages of Genesis—the first book—and of Revelation—the last book. It is the Spirit of Christ—the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End—the Spirit of the living God—the very Spirit which I trust is in the midst of us this evening, impelling every man and woman here present to help this Society in sending God's Word to every corner of the earth.

I sometimes wonder whether we rightly understand the true meaning of the term '*Lesson*' applied to each chapter of the Bible in the services of the Church of England. Regularly in those services fall on our ears the familiar words, 'Here endeth the first lesson;' 'Here endeth the second lesson;' and I fear that too often the lesson really does end there. I fear that too often we neglect to lay to

<sup>1</sup> I listened with great interest to the Rev. J. Sharp's address, and the report he read on the occasion of the Brixton meeting, and I gathered that the number of languages had increased to at least 280. See p. 32.

heart, and rarely carry out into practice, the lesson each chapter is intended to convey. And the reason may be that we are apt to forget that the Bible, though the great lesson-book, is not the teacher. The Bible requires a Teacher. And that Teacher must be the Spirit of Truth, who guides men into all truth—who inspired the writers of every chapter of the Bible, and brings home the lesson to every humbly receptive learner in answer to earnest prayer.

Yet we cannot doubt that the Spirit of Truth makes use of secondary means and human instruments for the interpretation of the lesson. In my own experience at Oxford I have listened for thirty years to the first preachers of the day,—preachers of every school of thought, and of every peculiarity and capability of utterance, and have scarcely ever heard a preacher who was not also a teacher. For is it not the case that God the Father having, more than eighteen hundred years ago, spoken to us by His Son, still continues to speak to us by His Son's ambassadors or missionaries, who, though they may have 'diversities of gifts,' have one and the same Spirit dwelling in them, guiding them, and directing them?

If, then, there are any Bible-worshippers here present, I would say, with the Dean, continue to worship your Bible. But I would also say, with both Bishop and Dean, let your worship be that of 'the heart, in the Spirit and not in the letter.' And I

venture here to express my conviction that as long as God's faithful people, in this beloved land of ours, continue not only to reverence but to love their Bible, and to protest earnestly and vigorously in a true, uncompromising, manly, protestant spirit against all erroneous and superadded doctrines not contained therein, so long may they claim to be the true members of God's Holy Catholic Church—the Witness and Keeper of Holy Writ.<sup>1</sup>

And what shall I say of this noble Society's work? Perhaps you may have observed in the newspapers that a certain well-known Member of Parliament lately jeered at our Government for sending its regiments, sword in hand, to Egypt and other places for the spread of civilisation, and, as he sarcastically added, 'in the interests of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts.' Well, there is another sword, the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, and as long as we continue to aid this great Society in its efforts to arm our courageous and devoted missionary regiments with that weapon of peace, progress, and true enlightenment, so long, I contend, will Great Britain continue to maintain her position of light and leading in the world.

<sup>1</sup> Church of England Prayer Book, Article XX.

## ADDRESS V.

*Delivered at the Anniversary Meeting of the 'Church of England Zenāna Missionary Society,' held in Prince's Hall, Piccadilly, on May 6, 1887.<sup>1</sup>*

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I CONSIDER it a privilege to preside at this meeting of the Church of England Zenāna Missionary Society to-day, because the work of this Society is intimately bound up with the welfare of our Indian fellow-subjects, which has been to me a matter of deep interest for nearly half a century. But I confess I feel myself placed in some difficulty, because I have already on various occasions spoken so much and written so much about the women of India, that I fear my words will fall on your ears somewhat flatly, or, to borrow the Prime Minister's phrase, like the 'dreary drip' of an oft-repeated tale, or like

<sup>1</sup> Some parts of this address were not actually delivered, because time would not permit. Some are repetitions of statements made on previous occasions, and printed in scattered essays.

The word Zenāna ought properly to be written Zanāna.

the monotonous sound of what in Sanskrit is called the regrinding of ground corn. Nevertheless, I would rather repeat myself than appear indifferent to the opportunity now presented to us of stimulating activity in the cause of Zenāna Missions at a time when the heart of England is stirred to its depths by the pitiable story of the Indian lady Rukmibai.

Let me introduce the remarks I have to make by recounting a curious experience which befel me while travelling in India. More than once I arrived as a guest at a friend's door, and was greeted by the hospitable master of the house thus,—‘Pray come in, I am delighted to see you, but I am sorry to tell you that my wife is at home.’ I soon found out that in India ‘home’ is the name for England. Even Anglicised natives use the word home not for their own homes, but for England; and it is not unusual to hear a young Indian say, ‘I am going home,’ when he means to say ‘I am going to make a journey to England.’ The real fact is that true English homes are not to be found in India, and I much doubt whether the simple words of our old English melody, ‘Home, Sweet Home,’ which thrilled through us on Wednesday evening last when sung at the Mansion-house Colonial Banquet, touching, as they must have done, a sympathetic chord in the heart of every Colonial delegate from the remotest quarters of the British Empire, would have been under-

stood or appreciated by any native of India, had any been present among us at that moment.

Very significant of this it is that there exists no word that I know of in any Indian language exactly equivalent to that grand old Saxon monosyllable 'home.'<sup>1</sup> Let English speakers throughout the globe—who number at the present time nearly one hundred millions, and are likely to number a thousand millions before another century has passed away—let every English speaker, I say—whether Briton, Irishman, American, or dweller in our Colonies—cherish as one of the most precious possessions in his noble speech that little word of four letters, pregnant with a thousand hallowed associations and sacred memories ; that little word 'home'—which, if you will forgive a homely platitude, is the key to our national greatness and prosperity. Certainly, the word *Zenāna*—meaning in Persian, 'the place of women'—cannot pretend to stand for 'home,' any more than the Persian *Mardāna*, 'the place of men' can mean 'home.' For home is not a mere collection of rooms, or even a mansion, however stately, where male relatives are aggregated on one side, and female on the other ; home is not a place where women merge their personal freedom and individuality in the personality of men ; still less is home a place where

<sup>1</sup> Archbishop Trench says of the words *Mother* and *Home*—

'There are but given  
Two names of sweeter note, Father and Heaven.'

husbands and wives do not work, talk, and eat together on terms of equality, or where daughters and child-widows are kept in gross ignorance, and made to do the work of household drudges. Rather is it a hallowed place of rest and of trustful intercourse, where husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, male and female relatives and friends, gather together round the same hearth in loving confidence and mutual dependence, each and all working together like the differently-formed limbs of one body, for the general good and for the glory of the great Creator who created them.

Now, the aim of this Society is to convert Indian Zenānas into true homes, moulded after a Christian pattern. We have all been deeply interested during the past week in hearing of the growth of missionary work, and the creeping onwards of the dawn of Christianity over the dark places of the earth, but I have no hesitation in expressing my conviction that until more is done for the Zenānas of India, no very marked success will be achieved in evangelising the two hundred and fifty-four millions of our vast Eastern dependency.

Think of what women have done for the cause of true religion in Europe ever since that memorable day when they first stood weeping round the Cross of the Saviour of the world. Think of what they are now doing in this great Metropolis, where without their aid, encouragement, and example, the



· battle constantly going on between Christianity and the forces of irreligion, infidelity, and lawlessness might often issue in disastrous defeat.

But it may be said: Surely you do not deny that the women of India exert some influence for good in their own country? Surely they often set an example of patience, of persevering endurance, and of devotion to their own religion and its ceremonial observances? Of course we know well that they do; and, what is more, we are ready to admit that female influence is quite as strong in India as in other countries. Nay, it is even more extended in its operation, for the pernicious practice of early marriages tends to a continual enlargement of the family fold, if I may so speak, till it sometimes embraces as many as fifty, sixty, or even a hundred members of the same family, all living together within the same precincts. It is curious to observe how, in that constantly widening family circle, a very despotic kind of home-rule is rigorously carried out. I call it despotic, but the despot is not a man, not even a man of 'light and leading,' but a woman, and sometimes an old woman—and not seldom a very old woman. This home despotism not unfrequently centres in some grandmother or great-grandmother; or, if she does not rule openly, she is the secret wire-puller. She gives the impulse to the whole machinery, to the wheel within wheel of the household machine, sway-



ing it in one direction or the other, according to her own peculiar bias of character ; and that bias, too often, alas ! sets in the wrong direction. Bear in mind, however, that the women of India are in many respects quite equal to the women of other countries ; they are patient, persevering performers of their duties, devoted to their husbands, and often enact the true womanly part of soothing suffering, calming passion, and ministering to the necessities and comforts of every member of the household.

If, then, the influence of mothers, grandmothers, and great-grandmothers be so potent a factor in the condition of India, think of what that country will become when all the noble instincts, all the tender sympathies of women, all their self-sacrificing devotion, zeal, and activity are enlisted on the side of Christ's liberating army, instead of on the side of those grim tyrants—ignorance, superstition, priestcraft, and that iron ruler caste. Yes, at the risk of wearying you, I must here repeat the oft-repeated cry—that cry which rises day by day to heaven ; that cry which calls on every philanthropist in our own land for help,—pleading the urgent, the vital need of India for an entire reconstruction and reorganisation of family life and of the relationship between the sexes.

And let me here say that we shall effect but little towards the improvement of the condition of the women of India unless we address ourselves

to the amelioration of both sides of Indian society. Let us by no means relax our Zenāna work, or damp the zeal of those devoted Christians who are consecrating their energies to the extension of Zenāna missions. On the contrary, let us help them to the best of our power; and give all honour to those noble ladies who sacrifice their own ease, and the comforts of their own homes, to toil in a distant land, and minister to the immediate needs of their ignorant Indian sisters. But let us not shut our eyes to the fact that all such labours may be compared to mere external applications employed for the alleviation of pain in particular cases. They are useful in affording temporary relief, but they are powerless to renovate the root of the diseased and debilitated system, which is the real cause of the evil.

In short, the truth must be told. We must begin with the men. Our first efforts must be directed to the education of the *characters* of the men of India, and of their best instincts, aptitudes, and faculties. We must labour—not to inflate their intellects with the knowledge which puffeth up; not to confuse their minds with oppositions of science, falsely so-called; not to overload their brains with the facts of history, or to over-excite them with the fictions of poetry and romance, but to build up their whole characters, to infuse sound health and vigour into their innermost natures, physical, mental, moral, and spiritual. When we have, in this manner, really and

truly formed, as well as informed, our Indian youths, and turned them into true men, true husbands, and true fathers, we may trust them to see that Indian girls are turned into true women, true wives, and true mothers. No husband and father will then consent to sacrifice his sons and daughters by permitting them to contract marriages in childhood, by putting it in their power to have sons and daughters of their own before their own education is completed, and before their own faculties of mind and body are matured.

I think, too, that in our endeavour to influence public opinion in regard to the co-ordinate education of the men and women of India, more attention might be directed to their relative position in ancient times. The early condition of women was, to a certain extent, one of inferiority, but it was a much nearer approach to the Christian idea of a due co-ordination between the sexes than it is at present.

When the Vedic hymns were current in Northern India (fourteen or fifteen centuries B.C.), women enjoyed much real independence; monogamy was the rule; women were allowed to choose their own husbands, and widows might marry again. 'Women,' says Manu, 'were created to be mothers. As a mother,' he declares, 'a woman is entitled to more respect than a thousand fathers.' Manu makes no allusion to the Satī, or faithful wife, who burnt

herself with her dead husband, and he permitted—as the Mosaic law did (Deut. xxv. 5; St. Matt. xxii. 24)—a widow, under certain circumstances, to marry a deceased husband's brother. An important point, too, was that the youthful Brāhman was required to study for at least nine years in the house of his preceptor, before he was permitted to become a householder. The great lawgiver gave no encouragement to the present practice of child-marriages.

It is certain, too, that through the whole heroic period of Indian history, and up to the beginning of the Christian era, women had many rights and privileges from which they were subsequently excluded. They were not shut out from the light of heaven behind the Purdah, or within the four walls of the Zenāna.

Any one who is able to study the Sanskrit dramas, will find in those admirable pictures of domestic manners abundant confirmation of the theory that the better classes of women in former days had received some sort of education, or could at least read and write; and that they enjoyed considerable freedom. For example, although they themselves spoke the provincial dialects, they were addressed by educated men in Sanskrit, and understood the learned language perfectly. They frequently appeared unveiled in public, and were not restricted to the society of their own families. Sītā exhibited

herself to the army. Śākuntalā journeyed to the city of King Dushyanta, and appeared openly in his court. Damayantī travelled about quite unattended. Rāma says in reference to his wife, ‘Neither houses, nor vestments, nor enclosing walls are the screen of a woman. Her own virtue alone protects her.’

And how does the great Indian Epic (the Mahābhārata) describe the position and character of a wife in ancient times, perhaps more than 2000 years ago? :—

‘A wife is half the man, his truest friend—  
A loving wife is a perpetual spring  
Of virtue, pleasure, wealth ; a faithful wife  
Is his best aid in seeking heavenly bliss ;  
A sweetly-speaking wife is a companion  
In solitude ; a father in advice ;  
A mother in all seasons of distress ;  
A rest in passing through life’s wilderness.’

Every Indian husband, then, should strive to break ground in social reform by gradually restoring his wife to the old ideal. There is no need for any sudden or violent revolution. No sensible person desires that society should undergo any startling shock, any alarming convulsion, any abrupt revulsion of thought or overpowering cataclysm of public opinion. All that is wanted, as a beginning, is a simple return to the ancient constitution and condition of Indian family life. I am glad to say that when last in India I saw signs that its

educated men—educated by ourselves—are beginning to perceive that before they can cry out for more political freedom they ought to set the example of giving back to their women the social freedom they once enjoyed. They ought not to betroth their child-daughters at three or four years of age, and then legally marry them at eight or nine to boys of whom they know nothing, and then finally force them to take the last step of living as wives with their boy-husbands at the age of eleven or twelve.

Perhaps some here present may not know of these three protracted stages in an Indian girl's marriage relations—the betrothal, the legal marriage ceremony, and the final act of quitting the father's home to live with the boy-husband. Of course, all who have resided much in India, are aware that the one engrossing anxiety of Indian parents for their children is for their marriage, not for their education. Now the evil, the intolerable evil, or rather the cruel wrong, is that the second, or intermediate ceremony, constitutes the legal marriage, and that, if the child-husband dies soon after it, the child-wife becomes a child-widow, condemned to virgin widowhood throughout the remainder of her life. The last census informs us that there are 21,000,000 widows in India, and half of these are virgin widows.

Again, it is probably not known to every one

here that the second or legal ceremony, performed when a girl is about eight years of age, is a long and tedious process. The various rites and festivities may be protracted for many days, costing large sums of money, and crippling the resources of the parents for the rest of their lives. But the really crucial part of the process is very short. It consists in the child-bride walking round the sacred fire hand in hand with the child-bridegroom in seven steps. Not till the seventh step is the marriage held to be irreversible.<sup>1</sup> Extraordinary indeed it seems to our ideas that the irrevocable seventh step should not be put off till the bride is able to plant her foot down firmly and willingly. Surely to compel her to take this fatal walk round the fire is nearly as bad as to force her, should she become a widow, to enter the fire as a Satī (sutee)?

Let me here remind you that for a long time, to our great disgrace, and from a mistaken idea that Satī was a custom sanctioned by ancient Indian lawgivers, we allowed Indian widows to burn themselves with the dead bodies of their husbands. Yet we strictly prohibited compulsion. In one particular year no less than 800 widows burned them-

<sup>1</sup> According to some, the crucial part of the ceremony is the Vivāha-homa : and in some parts of India it probably is so. The Homa part of the marriage rite consists in throwing Lāja, *i.e.*, moistened and fried grain, into the sacred fire. Among the lower castes a necklace of black beads is put round the neck of the bride (like the marriage-ring in Christian countries).



selves, but on every occasion our officials watched to see that no coercion was used.

Why then in the present day compel any woman to live as a wife with a man whom she has scarcely ever seen, whose character she possibly despises, and who perhaps has led an unsteady life, amid objectionable surroundings? Why, in short, compel her to do what she will regard as very like being burnt alive, if she has education enough to know the meaning of marriage? Of course our Government is very properly reluctant to meddle with customs believed to be deeply rooted in ancient Hindū law. But is this custom so deeply rooted? What more authoritative lawgiver has ever existed in India than Manu? All the later codes are supposed to be based on his code, and yet in the Ninth Book of Manu, verse 90, we find the following:—‘A girl having reached the age of puberty should wait three years, but at the end of that time she should herself choose a suitable husband.’ It is true that modern commentators maintain that this self-choice is only legal when there are no parents to give a daughter away. Yet Manu at any rate here concedes the principle of self-choice, and what is more, he is clearly opposed to child-marriage. We know, too, that in ancient times a girl of the royal or military caste was often allowed by her father to choose a husband for herself, being then called a Svayamvarā. The



highest poetical talent in India has been consecrated to descriptions of such bridals, where the bride selects for herself from a crowd of assembled suitors.

But it is said, why make so much disturbance about a solitary case like that of Rukmibai, when the system on the whole works well? The vast majority of the women of India, we are told, prefer that husbands should be chosen for them. Of course they do. What else could be expected when they are married as ignorant children before they know what marriage really means, and when their minds are kept in ignorance, and their characters are wholly undeveloped by education? So soon as education has taken effect upon them, they will all recoil from actual matrimonial union with unsuitable, and, perhaps, uneducated and demoralised husbands forced upon them against their will. Happily for India, the progress of female education, and the beneficent work of Zenāna Missions cannot now be arrested—you can no more bar its onward march than you can stop the flow of water issuing from an ice-bound mountain acted on by the summer sun. Some of the men whom we have educated are beginning to insist on having wives fit to be their companions, and not mere domestic drudges. Not that the idea of substituting mere learning for a knowledge of household duties ought to be encouraged for a single moment. It is true that in one of the Upanishads,

a sage carries on a philosophic dialogue with his wife, and it is remarkable that in ancient times the women of India were often distinguished as Pandits and teachers; and, in harmony with this, learning is in India presided over by a female divinity. Quite recently, too, we have had the case of the lady Pandit Ramābai, a lady remarkable for her Sanskrit learning and linguistic attainments. The history of her case is instructive, as showing that what is wanted in India is not too much learning and over instruction for her women, but rather co-ordinate education for men and women. We do not want Indian girls to be turned into bright blue female Pandits any more than we desire young Indian men to be turned into pedantic prigs. We do not desire manish women any more than womanish men. We desire the correlated education of each according to their respective spheres of duty, so that each may be a help meet for the other, in conformity with the true Christian ideal. We want Indian wives to be the complements of their husbands, and not mere supplements or appendices. This is what the Church of England Zenāna Mission is labouring to accomplish; and, once accomplished, the two cankers which are still eating into the very heart of Indian social life—child-marriage and enforced widowhood—will assuredly disappear.

As a last word, I commend the interesting publications of this Society to the perusal of all here

present, and if any philanthropist be at this Meeting who has hitherto not given much thought to the needs of our great Indian dependency, I would entreat him to give a good slice of his sympathy and aid to those noble women of England who are striving to open the shutters of Indian Zenānas, —to let in the free and healthy air of heaven, and to carry the light of truth into the dark recesses of closed houses where ignorance, error, frivolity, and superstition still brood undisturbed.

To some of us here present, who have been lovers of India, and workers for India for nearly half a century, it is delightful to feel that this Jubilee year of our exemplary Queen, who personally enters into and sympathises with the trials and troubles of every woman in her Indian Empire, is likely to be marked by a very decided advance in the work of this important Society.



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